STAR WARS™

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GUNGAN SUB

Aboard the aquatic bongo

Boss Nass

The Naboo Abyss

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STAR WARS

Though the amphibian Gungan people of Naboo were admirable swimmers, fully at home in the waters that concealed their settlements, they still used submersibles to cover great distances quickly and as safely as possible – the waterways of Naboo concealed many dangerous beasts...

"MASTER, WHAT'S A BONGO?"

PADAWAN OBI-WAN KENOBI

THE GUNGAN BONGO

TRIBUBBLE SUBMERSIBLE

Constructed using ancient, traditional methods handed down through untold generations, the Gungan bongo submersibles came in a variety of basic sizes – from small single passenger vessels to large mass-transport subs. The bongos even provided the basis for later Gungan spacecraft.

A blend of organic materials and high technology, the earliest bongo submersibles were constructed by one small Gungan tribe. Though later swallowed up by a larger group, their skills were unaltered and honoured. Millennia later, the technology was more widely known. However, the overwhelming majority of bongo were made by the Otoh Gunga Bongameken Cooperative. Based close to the Gungan capital city of Otoh Gunga, the Cooperative had a large complex of hydrostatic bubbles and other facilities, and also ran and maintained the bongo pens within Otoh Gunga itself, along with the craft therein.

Growth Industry

Jedi Master Qui-Gon Jinn, his Padawan and their Gungan guide were given 'loan' of a tribubble bongo sub for a journey through the core of the planet. By the time of the Trade Federation invasion of the planet Naboo, the Otoh Gunga Bongameken Cooperative were using a mixture of ancient techniques and some more modern additions in the manufacture of their bongo vehicles. The hulls were still crafted by hand, around a frame made of a fast-growing coral. Individual components and compartments were fixed to the strong, flexible frame. Some of these parts of the assembly also began as coral frames, although the Cooperative had also begun to use some technology traded from the human Naboo, and even fitted Naboo cargo containers.

Propulsion System

Like most bongos, the tribubble was fitted with a cylindrical plasma-based generator that provided all of the vehicle's electric power. This was primarily utilised by the craft's electromotive propulsion system. The four spinning, flexible tentacles at the rear of the bongo pulled in and displaced huge volumes of water through the electromotive field they generated, driving the vessel forward at high speed. The already aqua-dynamic shape of the ship was aided by the blade-like forward driving plane, which had its own electromotive system.

The generator also powered the three hydrostatic bubbles that maintained breathable air inside the vessel. The ship's systems were designed to use the minimum energy possible, and the engines hummed quietly as the ship whipped through the waters, leaving only a stream of bubbles in its wake. In an emergency, the cockpit could be ejected from the rest of the vessel. Though the escape pod had limited repulsorlift mobility, it had no generator and its battery power was very limited. Survivors had to reach a safe area quickly before the hydrostatic bubbles and other systems failed.

JOURNEY TO THEED

UNDERWATER MISSION

Having delivered the Jedi's warning to the Gungan leadership at Otoh Gunga, Qui-Gon Jinn used the Force to 'request' transport to the Naboo capital, Theed. He was 'loaned' a tribubble bongo, but his Gungan guide warned him that their journey would not be easy.

In the end, Jar Jar Binks' warning was proven timely. Master Jinn's Padawan, Obi-Wan Kenobi, took the controls of the Gungan submersible – Jar Jar meant well, but the two Jedi had already come to understand that the clumsy, accident-prone Gungan might not be the best individual to be permitted to drive.

The Core

Obi-Wan, with the Force as his guide, smoothly piloted the bongo through the honeycomb of waterways that ran through the porous surface of

the planet. The simple, instinctive controls of the Gungan vessel made the beginning of the journey almost a pleasure. Soon, however, the vehicle's bright navigation lights were required as the ship entered ominously dark tunnels. It wasn't long before an opee sea killer grabbed the bongo, its teeth easily piercing the sub and damaging the generator. Fortunately, the sea killer was caught and eaten by a sando aqua monster. The freed sub limped off, its power ebbing away. Not long after, the power failed entirely. While Jar Jar fretted, Obi-Wan managed to reroute the systems. The lights came on to reveal a massive colo claw fish. Escape was possible thanks to the intervention of another, even larger sando aqua monster. Somehow, the bongo reached Theed even as the generators died, surfacing near a fork of the River Solleu.

The bongo they were 'loaned' got Qui-Gon, Obi-Wan and Jar Jar to Theed, but only just.

JAR JAR BINKS

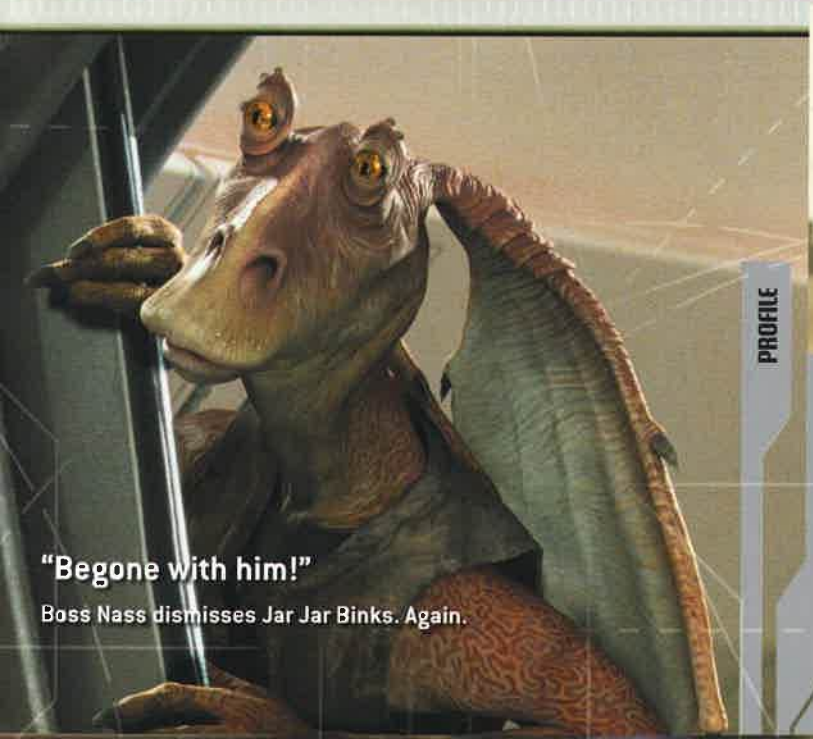
THIEF, OUTCAST, SENATOR

In Galactic history, there can be few more contentious characters than Senate Representative for Naboo and the Chommell Sector Jar Jar Binks. Portrayed by many as nothing more than a clumsy imbecile, Binks has also been accused by a few revisionist historians of being a covert agent of Emperor Palpatine.

Jar Jar Binks lived much of his life in cheerful oblivion. Like an eternally optimistic tourist, he appeared blinkered to much of what was going on around him. However, Jar Jar was capable of enormous bravery, was a hugely loyal friend, and his naïve insight shocked many of his 'betters' with its undeniable wisdom. Unfortunately, that naïveté landed him in trouble many times, and left him open to being manipulated by cunning and unprincipled individuals.

Early Days And Exile

The charitable, inclusive nature of Gungan society meant that even an abandoned youth like Jar Jar Binks, expelled from every school he ever attended, could find work. Unfortunately, most of those jobs didn't last long. Eventually, Jar Jar ended up as a street musician. In his eyes he was very popular as many people paid him – but they were paying him to stop and move on. It was during this time that he was spotted by minor criminal gang leader Roos Tarpals. The wily Tarpals immediately recognised that Binks made a perfect distraction for guards and local law-enforcement officials while he and the rest of the small gang ripped off whatever facility was the target. What Tarpals hadn't allowed for was becoming friends with Jar Jar. Perhaps some of Jar Jar's good nature rubbed off on Tarpals, because he left the criminal life and joined the Gungan Grand Army, eventually becoming Captain Tarpals. While the former gang leader built his career, Binks built a more negative reputation. Though he saved the Boss of Otoh Gunga, Rugor Nass, and his niece, Major Fassa, his clumsiness caused greater and greater damage. Finally, Boss Nass was left with no choice but to



"Begone with him!"

Boss Nass dismisses Jar Jar Binks. Again.

PROFILE

Jar Jar Binks

Homeworld
Naboo

Species
Otolla Gungan

Gender
Male

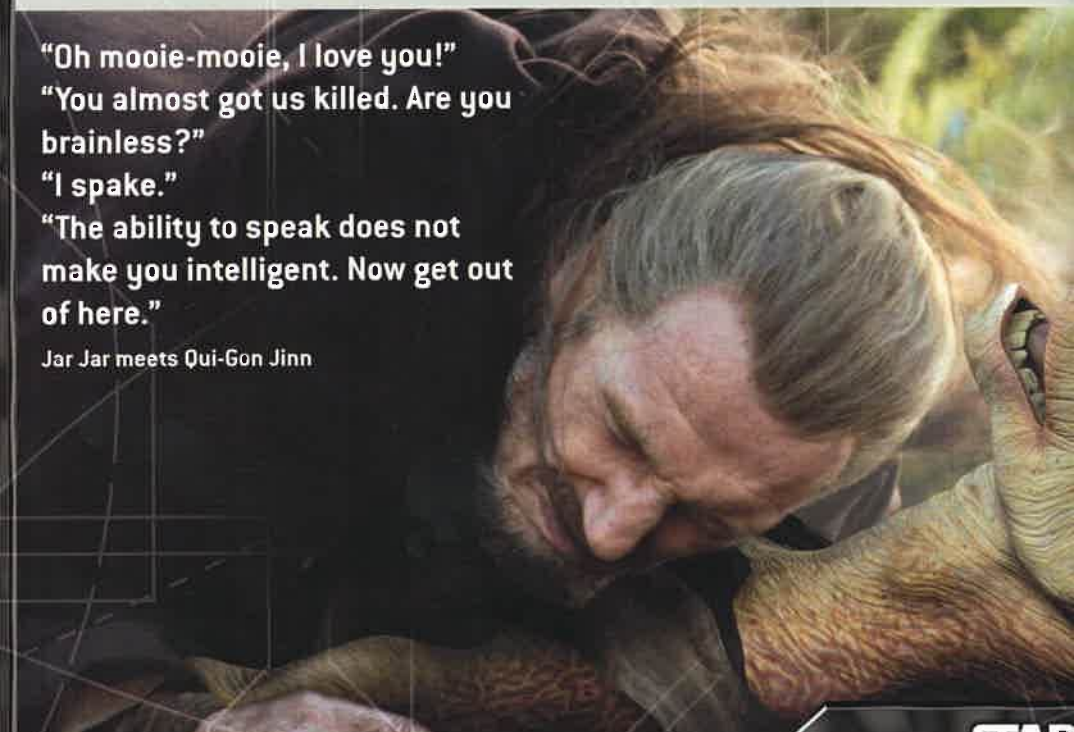
Height
1.96m

Affiliations
Gungans, Galactic Republic & Senate

exile Binks, and it was Tarpals who was given the duty of taking Jar Jar far from the city and leaving him in the swamps.

Jar Jar vs The Trade Federation

Not long after he was exiled, and while he was still naïvely enjoying the experience, Jar Jar was confused by a sudden rush of local wildlife flooding past him. Moments later, huge repulsorlift machines roared towards him, crushing down whole trees as they came. A robed human ran at him, shouting for him to get out of the way. Jar Jar panicked, ran into the man, and they fell. The huge machines passed over them. A relieved Binks figured the human had saved his life and swore a life debt. It was a moment that had huge repercussions for Binks and the greater galaxy. The human was Jedi Master Qui-Gon Jinn, and the machines belonged to the invading Trade Federation droid armies. Having found no welcome for himself or his new Jedi friends, Jar Jar found himself escaping Naboo with their queen, making a new friend on Tatooine called Annie, and ending up on Coruscant. There, his conversation with Queen Amidala



"Oh mooie-mooie, I love you!"
"You almost got us killed. Are you brainless?"
"I spake."
"The ability to speak does not make you intelligent. Now get out of here."

Jar Jar meets Qui-Gon Jinn

Ouch Time

"It's a clear desa Separatists made a pact witha desa Federation du Trade. Senators! Dellow felegates! In response to this direct threat to the Republic, mesa propose that the Senate give immediately emergency powers to the Supreme Chancellor!" With those words, Senate Representative Jar Jar Binks inadvertently made the Clone Wars inevitable.

led him back to Naboo where he was responsible for bringing the Naboo and Gungan peoples together against the Trade Federation. Unfortunately, this made him a general in the Gungan Grand Army, and Binks saw action in the battle outside Theed.

Triumph, Tribulations & Tragedy

The Trade Federation was driven from Naboo, and the alliance between Gungans and Naboo resulted in Jar Jar becoming the first Gungan representative at the Galactic Senate. Unfortunately, now-Senator Padmé Amidala couldn't always be there to prevent Jar Jar making the mistakes he became famous for even on Coruscant. While Padmé was a captive on Geonosis, Jar Jar was tricked into tabling a motion in the Senate to grant Chancellor Palpatine powers to form a Grand Army of the Republic – the very motion that Padmé had been fighting against. The Clone Wars began and, while Jar Jar did what he could, often displaying great heroism and resolve, the machinations of the Sith overtook him and the Republic. Palpatine became Emperor, clone troops became stormtroopers and, far worse for Jar Jar, Padmé Amidala died. While a deeply saddened Jar Jar was on Naboo for her funeral, what happened thereafter is unknown. Unconfirmed reports placed him on Coruscant after the Battle of Endor, experiencing the brief freedom celebrations following the destruction of the second Death Star. That would be just like Jar Jar.

GUNGAN BATTLE WAGON

PRIMITIVE, BUT EFFECTIVE

Though the Naboo only had their security volunteer force, the Gungans had a standing military – the Gungan Grand Army. Despite their seemingly primitive equipment, the Gungans were able to hold their own (at least for a while) against the battle-hardened Trade Federation droid forces.

The Gungans rode bipedal kaadu into battle, and harnessed huge fambaa to carry the shield generator units. However, domesticated falumpaset pulled the Grand Army's battle wagons. Falumpaset were tough creatures and, though occasionally stubborn, they were not easily startled even by the noise of a pitched battle.

Ride On

There were two distinct forms of battle wagon – one to carry ammunition and one to make use of it. The ammunition in question was the booma – a spherical, flexible organic matrix containing charged plasma harvested naturally by the Gungans. The plasma could burn organic targets or short-circuit vehicles or droids. Boomas came in a variety of sizes, from those small enough to be thrown from hand launchers, like the atlatl or the staff-like cesta, to huge boomas fired from catapults. The wheeled battle wagons were perfectly suited to carrying the boomas, regardless of size. Powered vehicles would have been horribly vulnerable to any plasma leaks. As well as the ammunition wagons, there were the catapults. These tipped up to be towed into position, and were able to hurl their boomas over the heads of the Grand Army to mow down lines of advancing enemy infantry.

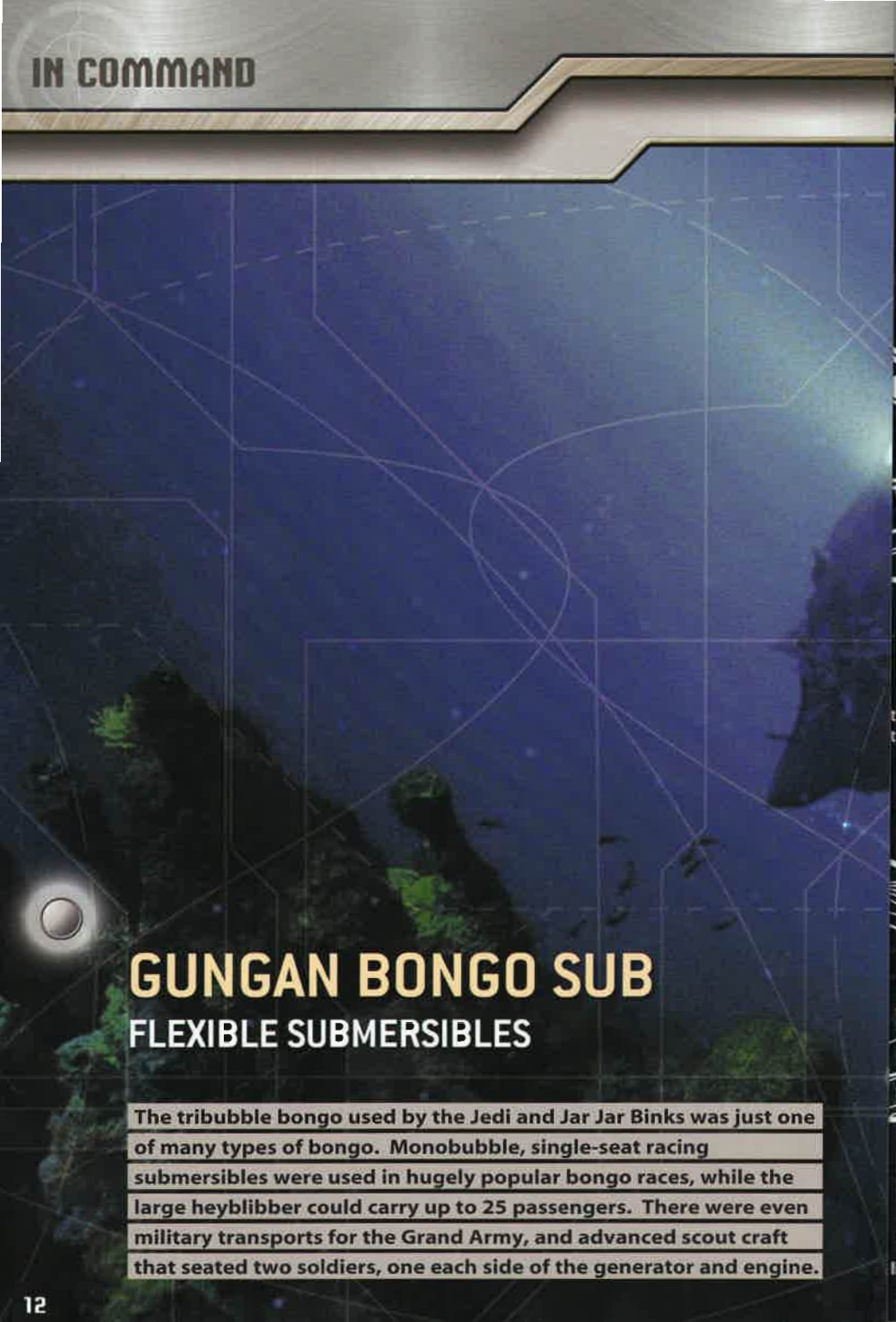
Gungan Battle Wagon PROFILE

Type
Military battlefield transport

Homeworld
Naboo

Weapons
None. Used to transport ammunition or a catapult.

Affiliation
Gungan Grand Army



GUNGAN BONGO SUB

FLEXIBLE SUBMERSIBLES

The tribubble bongo used by the Jedi and Jar Jar Binks was just one of many types of bongo. Monobubble, single-seat racing submersibles were used in hugely popular bongo races, while the large heyblibber could carry up to 25 passengers. There were even military transports for the Grand Army, and advanced scout craft that seated two soldiers, one each side of the generator and engine.

GUNGAN TRIBUBBLE BONGO

Type
Civilian (Gungan) submersible transport vehicle

Manufacturer
Otoh Gunga Bongameken Cooperative

Length
15 metres

Maximum Speed
85km/h

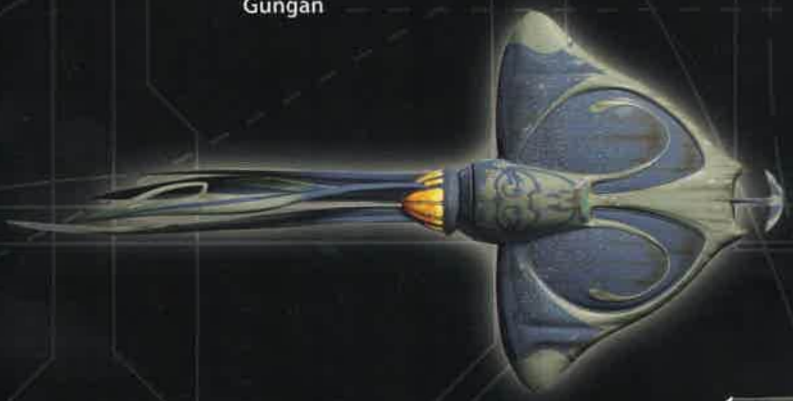
Weapons
None

Crew
1 x Pilot

Passengers
2

Cargo Capacity
2 x 800kg

Affiliation
Gungan



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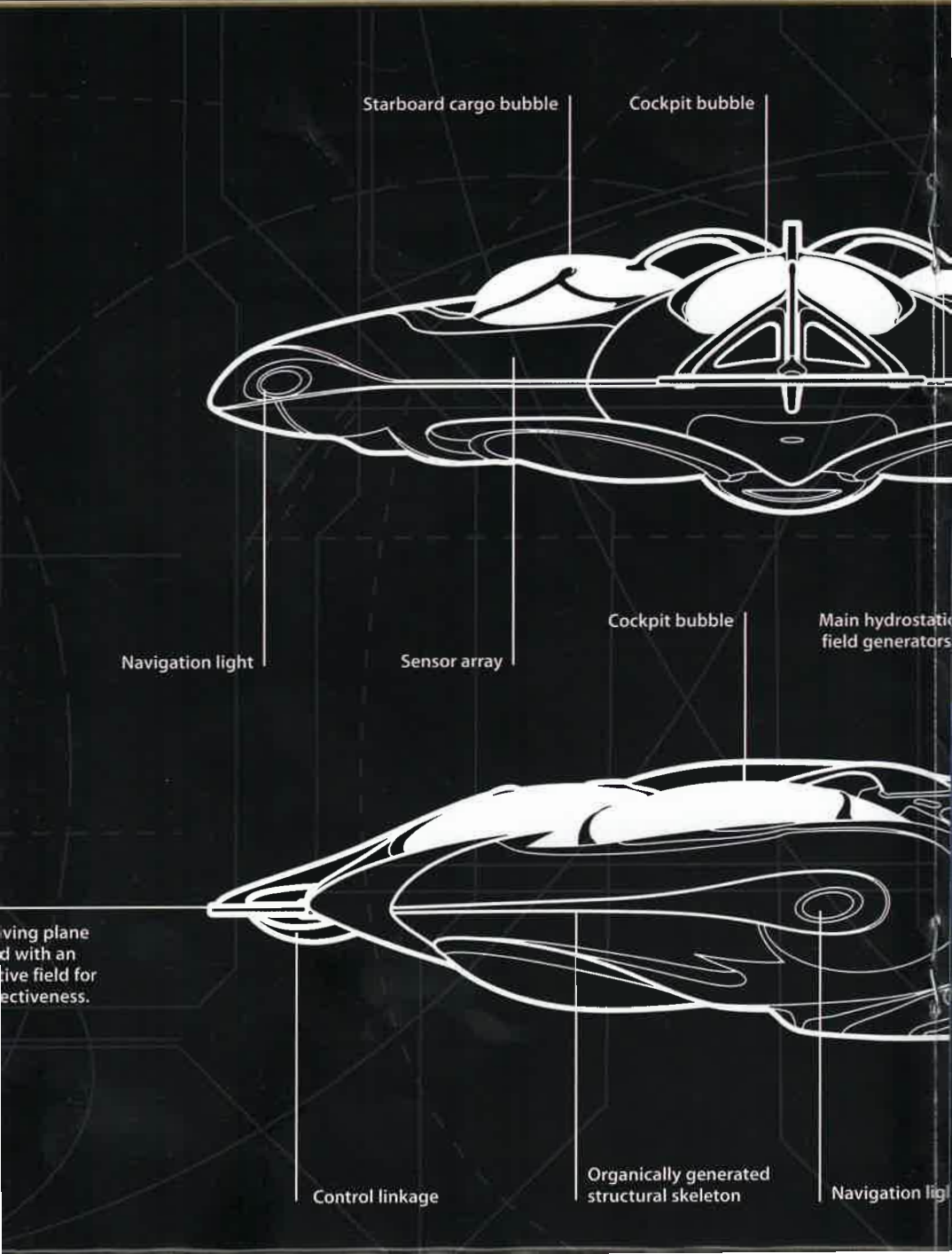

Starboard cargo bubble
Cockpit bubble
Navigation light
Sensor array
Cockpit bubble
Main hydrostati
field generators
ving plane
d with an
ive field for
ectiveness.
Control linkage
Organically generated
structural skeleton
Navigation lig

Port cargo bubble

Fins are tough but flexible.

atic
ors.

Sensor array

Navigation light

Centrifugal pulse
conversion electric engine

light

Flexible primary and secondary electromotive
fins drive and steer the submersible.

Secondary

Blending nature and technology

Bongos were fitted with repulsorlift disks to guide them out of the bongo pens and through the city spaces before engaging their main engine for travel in open water. The buoyancy system was quite unique, and used the unique organic properties of the vehicle. A special oil was held in reservoirs in the 'wings' of the submersible. When required, the oil was released into porous buoyancy chambers that absorbed the oil, increasing their density and causing the sub to sink lower. The process could be reversed for the opposite effect.

Though the Gungans are naturally powerful swimmers, they do rely on submersible vehicles to travel the depths of Naboo's waters. One of their most striking technological achievements is the Gungan bongo submarine.

drive fin

BOSS RUGOR NASS

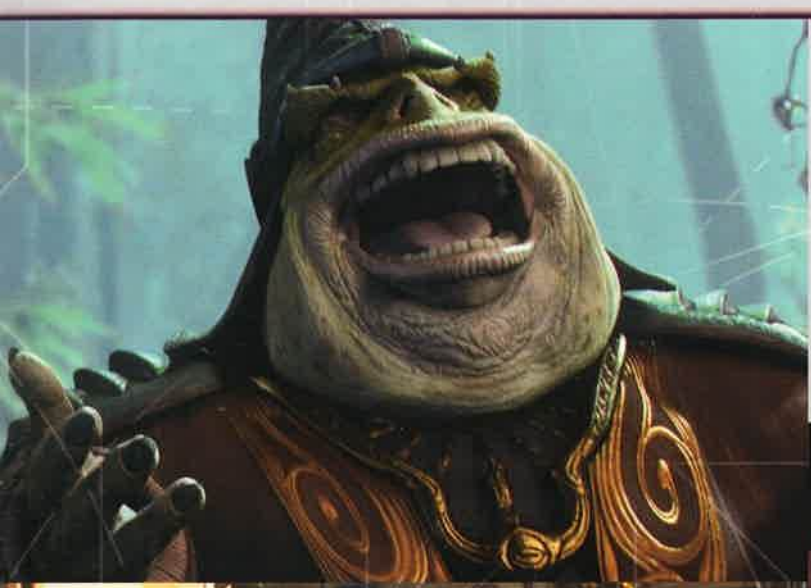
LIBERATOR OF HIS PEOPLE

While Rugor Nass is quite rightly credited for bringing the Gungan people out of their self-imposed splendid isolation, the impetuous urge to do so was certainly not there from the outset in this essentially conservative leader.

Nass was a proud descendant of Boss Gallo, the benevolent Gungan leader who united the planet's warring tribes into a single people. Rugor made much of the connection, and this form of self-aggrandisement was very much part of his character. However, it could be said that Nass had much to be proud of. In his own right, he was a strong, well respected leader, physically tough (he won the Big Nasty Free-For-All three years in a row), and an excellent organiser. His swift ascension of the civil service career ladder was on his own merit, and the landslide victory he won when he stood for election as Top Boss could not be argued with.

Change of Heart

Nass made vast improvements to the capital city of Otoh Gunga. This was because he wanted to leave the Gungans a legacy at least as great as his revered ancestor. One thing Rugor was utterly fixated upon was his prejudice against the human Naboo. When Jar Jar Binks, a recently exiled thorn in Nass' side, brought two Jedi to Otoh Gunga with news of a planetary invasion, Nass was unmoved, preferring to leave the Naboo to their fate. Unfortunately, the Trade Federation droid armies came looking for the Gungans, and only Boss Nass' organisational skills prevented the exodus from Otoh Gunga descending into a bloody rout. When Binks next returned, he brought no less than the Queen of the Naboo to the Gungan holy place. Amidala knelt before Boss Nass to ask for his help, something that touched his heart and changed his mind. Together, the Gungans and the Naboo won back their planet, with Boss Nass taking his (mostly) fair share of the credit.



Did you Know...?

After the Battle of Naboo, Boss Nass rebuilt Otoh Gunga and the other damaged Gungan settlements. His alliance with the Naboo was honoured, and his people even began to colonise other worlds. Unfortunately, the Clone Wars would see at least one of those colonies destroyed.

PROFILE

Boss Nass

Homeworld
Naboo

Species
Ankura Gungan

Gender
Male

Height
2.06m

Vehicles
Heyblibber

Affiliation
Gungan

NABOO PLANET CORE

DEADLY ABYSS

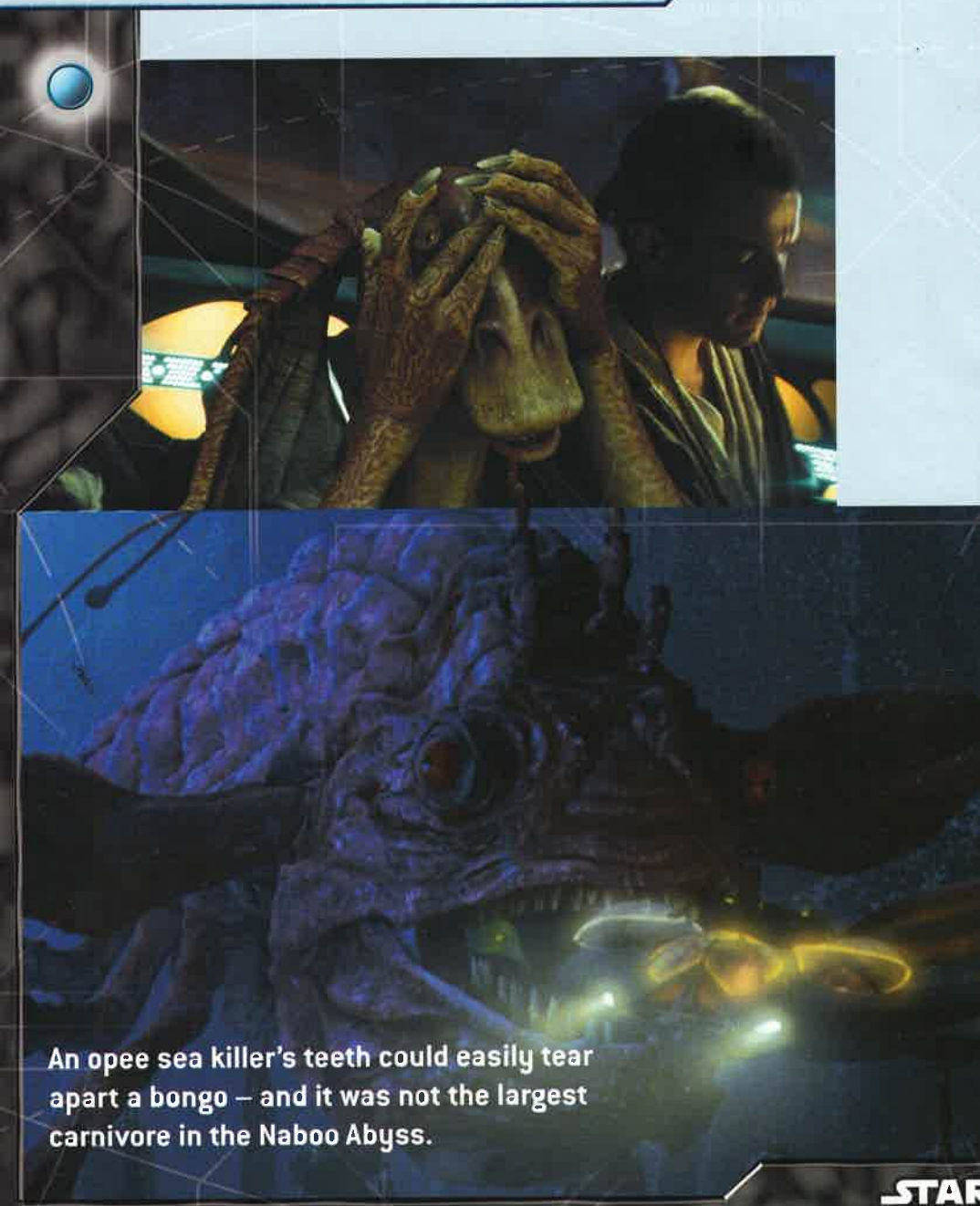
The planet Naboo was a curiosity of nature. Its core was composed of a unique plasma that would work its way up through the rocks, carving tunnels and caverns. The majority of this intricate network was flooded, creating what was known as the Naboo Abyss.

For the most part, it was technically possible to travel from any point on the planet to any other through the network of tunnels, emerging in a cave mouth, lake, inland sea or ocean. However, some locations were isolated by unique quirks of geology or simply by fate. The picturesque Lake Country, so often used by the Naboo as a holiday refuge, was one of the very few places on the whole planet where people could swim in relative safety. Cut off from the rest of the flooded tunnel network, there was very little chance of the more dangerous creatures ruining someone's vacation.

Creatures of Myth and Nightmare

While the human Naboo were aware of the Abyss, the Gungan people exploited it. They farmed the fish and harvested safe plasma from locap weed buds. The Gungans used the upper levels as routes to and from their settlements, traversing these subterranean highways in a variety of submersibles or even, on rare occasions, simply by swimming. The Gungan militia did what they could to keep these areas safe, but they knew of very real dangers that most Naboo dismissed as myths. Unfortunately, the unique geology of Naboo bred a unique and occasionally highly dangerous fauna. Nor were carnivorous creatures the only dangers. Weakened tunnels and caves could collapse. Large superheated plasma bursts would occasionally work their way up through populated areas, suddenly heating the water to ferocious temperatures, or driving huge beasts up from the benighted depths to test the resolve – and equipment – of the Gungan Grand Army. Such creatures were the reason that even the Gungans stayed as much as possible in the upper levels of the Abyss.

“There’s always a bigger fish.”
Qui-Gon Jinn



An opee sea killer's teeth could easily tear apart a bongo – and it was not the largest carnivore in the Naboo Abyss.

The Legendary Sando Aqua Monster

Many Naboo dismissed the sando aqua monster as a myth, despite very, very occasional sightings of the beasts sunning themselves on sand banks, or even the occasional corpse washing up on a beach. These were mostly young animals fallen foul of a colo or opee sea killer. Scientists sometimes tried to study the creatures, but their rarity and lethal nature made such admirable efforts extremely difficult. Captain Panaka, while a lieutenant, once saw an injured youngster during an investigation beyond Theed.

With the exception of some fish and crustacean species, which were generally the smaller ones, there were few creatures in the Naboo Abyss that were not carnivorous or at least omnivorous. Even the easily domesticated mammalian blarths (which the Gungans used as watch animals and pets) were voracious. The Abyss hid giant tee scalefish that could swallow unwary Gungans (more used to the smaller version of the creature, which they hunted), whole in a single gulp. However, these were small fry by comparison with the three primary hunters of the Naboo Abyss.

Here Be Monsters

The opee sea killer was a crustacean/fish hybrid. Growing to some 20 metres in length, it was a master of concealment and ambush. Its fins and adapted legs could propel it along slowly, but the opee used water sucked in through its mouth and quickly expelled through pores towards the rear of its tapering body to catch up with even the fastest fish. The opee had a long, muscular, sticky tongue that would shoot forward in an instant and reel prey back into the creature's mouth. The colo claw fish was one of only two beasts that preyed on the opee. Eel-like, it could grow to 40 metres. Its forward flippers had evolved into clawed appendages that held larger prey for eating. Most of the time, the colo's jaw would unhinge to allow it to swallow prey whole.

Unfortunately for the colo, smaller opee could live long enough inside it to eat their way back out. The only known creature in the Naboo abyss able to predate both the opee and the colo was the mammalian sando aqua monster. Males had been measured at 200 metres, females at 160 metres, though larger beasts were rumoured to exist. This long, sinewy beast with the huge jaws, flat, aquiline head and clawed, webbed hands and feet was truly the stuff of legends.

AHMED BEST
PLAYING JAR JAR BINKS

Jar Jar Binks was played by Ahmed Best, who provided the voice for the hapless Gungan and was also present on set during filming wearing a partial Jar Jar costume to act as a reference for the other actors. Best wore a visor to cover his own eyes so that the actors would refer more easily to those of the character.

Jar Jar was an entirely CGI character and, because he was so important to the film, was one of the first things that the crew worked on in pre-production. Developing the look of the character alone took over a year and a half. However, despite being a CGI character, there is a lot of Ahmed Best in there – not least those few moments when the actor actually appears on screen for close-ups. One such moment is when the audience sees Jar Jar's hand stuck in Anakin Skywalker's podracer.

From Stomp to Jar Jar

Best was brought in to audition for the role of Jar Jar when casting director Robin Gurland saw the actor and dancer in a performance by the musical group STOMP. His long, lanky and loose frame was perfect for the Gungan.

"Yeah, that was me up there," Ahmed agreed, shaking his head in amazement after seeing the film for the first time in May 1999. How did it feel to see this alter ego on the screen? "Well I was there, I did all that. I was there. And then Rob Coleman at ILM captured all my movements to make Jar Jar move,

First-time Reaction

"It was the most amazing, fantastic thing I've ever seen! The biggest surprise for me was Coruscant. When we were filming, the sets were all just blue, or green. For Coruscant, that landing platform scene, I had no idea that it would end up so busy in the film. I had no idea it was so huge!"
Ahmed Best

and so it really did feel like seeing myself up there. I mean, you look for yourself when you see a movie you're in for the first time. And that was me up there!"

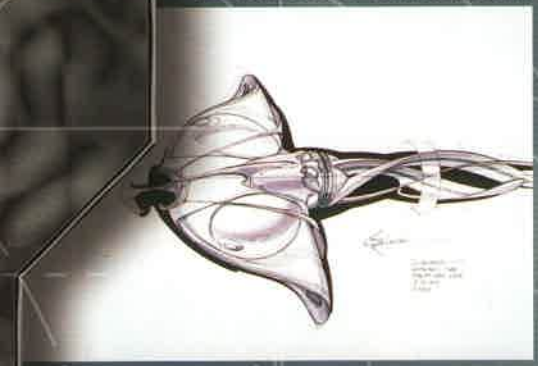
Creating Character

Director George Lucas remembered the challenges he faced in casting for Jar Jar, and the challenge facing Best on set. "I cast Ahmed Best because he was a talented actor. Also because he focuses on movement and dance to portray a character with his body. In the beginning that was the primary focus, because I knew I could figure out the voice later. What I had to determine with Ahmed was whether he was up to acting with all the other characters, whether he could give them what they needed. Could he really create this character I had in mind with his body movement? He turned in a great performance on the set."

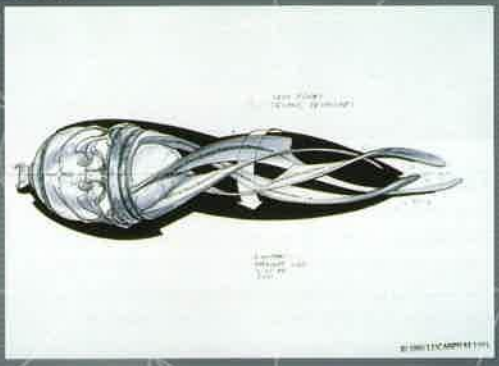
THE GUNGAN SUB

CREATING THE TRIBUBBLE BONGO

THE STAGES OF CREATING THE BONGO



1 Doug Chiang's final sketch, dating from 22 November 1995, came after a long period of experimenting with other ideas.

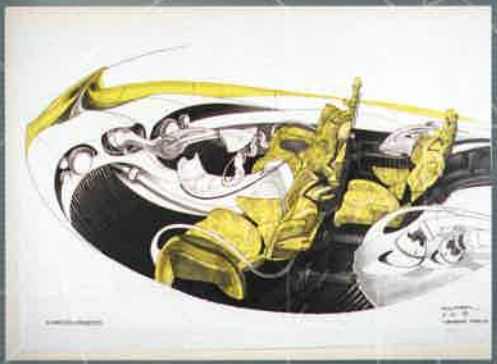


2 One of Chiang's original 'diving bell' designs from earlier in 1995. The propulsion system has already assumed something close to its final form.

5 The final design for the tribubble bongo, realised as a physical model. Most of what appeared on screen was created through CGI.

6 The underside of the digital model of the bongo, showing the complex forms and colouring chosen to suggest its organic origins.

Design Director Doug Chiang designed the bongo submersible, originally playing with the idea of an organic-looking diving bell. He eventually moved on to include squid or octopus-like tentacles at the rear of the ship to propel it, before combining that with a rejected earlier design idea to obtain the final look.



3 A concept idea for the interior colour scheme of the bongo. It was 1997 (the year filming began) before the exterior colours were finalised.

4 The manta-like look of the bongo came from a rejected idea for a larger passenger transport. Above: Another of the early concept designs.

7 The upper side of the digital model complete with cargo and crew visible through the large transparent areas.

8 The fate of the bongo sub was shown in a deleted scene included on the DVD release of Episode I – it fell down a waterfall in Theed.

1 What did the opee sea killer originally look like?

2 Was Jar Jar Binks always going to be an entirely CGI character?

3 Did actor Ahmed Best ever appear on screen?

ANSWERS:

1. At first, in sketches dating back to May 1995, the opee sea killer was essentially a huge jaw grafted onto a fish/crab body.

2. Initially, the thought had been only to create Jar Jar's head using CGI, with the body being that of an actor in costume. It proved easier and cheaper to have the entire character in CGI.

3. Parts of Ahmed Best, in Jar Jar costume, appear in close-ups in Episode I, but Best appears as the character Achk Med-Beq in the Outlander Club in Episode II.

W

Whiphid

Species
Episodes II & VI

Averaging over two metres tall, Whiphids came from the planet Toola in the Nilgaard Sector of the Outer Rim. Toola had a thin atmosphere, and was far enough from its sun to guarantee the temperature rarely got much above freezing. Adult Whiphids had long hairless faces with two tusks protruding from the front of the lower jaw, but were otherwise generally covered in thick fur. They had three fingers on each hand, ending in heavy, sharp claws. They also had two clawed toes. Whiphids had thick blubber under their skins that allowed them considerable protection from cold. In warmer climates, they shed fur and burned off the fat. Primitive tribal hunters, they began exploring the galaxy when they encountered traders looking to cut ice to sell elsewhere. The tough, intelligent Whiphids made excellent bounty hunters, but some followed more peaceful paths, including that of the Jedi.

Williams, Lt. Antidar

Character
Episode I

A human male from the planet Barkhesh in the Seitia sector of the Outer Rim, Williams was a gifted pilot who left his homeworld to seek his fortune in the Republic. His skills earned him a place with Senator Ranulph Tarkin's paramilitary expedition to engage Iaco Stark's commercial Combine in the Qotile System. The resulting Stark Hyperspace War was an ugly conflict. Williams' vessel, the *Invincible*, was destroyed over Troiken. Williams and the other survivors joined Jedi ambassadors to fight for survival until rescue came. Antidar did so well that he was awarded a commission in the Republic Judicial Forces. With them he flew *Consular*-class space cruisers. Unfortunately, he was pilot on the *Radiant VII* taking Jedi ambassadors to negotiate with the Trade Federation at Naboo. He was killed when his ship was destroyed in the hangar of a Neimoidian cargo freighter.

Winter

Character
Expanded Universe

Though Princess Leia Organa of Alderaan was raised as an only child, she was never alone – she had an adopted sister. Winter had been the daughter of a senatorial aide to Bail Organa, whose parents died. She and Leia became best friends. Their personalities were very different, and the reserved, regal Winter was often mistaken for the tomboy Princess, who was regularly grubby and in torn clothes. Winter and Leia looked very alike, despite the former's shock of white hair. With a little makeup, Winter often disguised herself as Leia, something she did in adult life to help protect the Rebel Princess. Winter, too, became an Alliance agent. Thanks to her perfect-recall memory, she made an exceptional spy. Winter worked tirelessly with the Alliance and the New Republic, and even helped raise Han and Leia's children, protecting them on several occasions. She married Rogue Squadron ace pilot Tycho Celchu.

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